

REMARKS

Claims 1-27 are pending. Claims 8-13 have been withdrawn from consideration by the Examiner for being directed to non-elected subject matter. By this Amendment, Claims 1-2, 4-6, 14-19, and 21-25 are amended. Support for the amendments and newly claimed subject matter is located in the originally filed application. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter is presented herein.

Election/Restriction

Applicants respectfully affirm the election, without traverse, to prosecute the invention of Group 1, Claims 1-7 and 14-27.

Form PTO-1449

Applicants respectfully note that the November 16, 2007 Office Action indicates that the "Other Documents" 1-4 cited in the Information Disclosure Statement filed on September 28, 2004, were not found in the application file. For the convenience of the Examiner, Applicants enclose herein copies of the relevant references as well as a copy of form PTO 1449 which the Examiner is requested to initial upon consideration of the references.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants respectfully acknowledge and appreciate the indication by the Examiner that Claims 4, 5, 18, 19 and 20, although objected to for depending on a rejected base claim, would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all of the features recited by the base claim, and any intervening claims.

In this regard, Applicants have incorporated the allowable subject matter of Claims 4 and 18 into independent Claims 1, 14 and 21, thereby placing Claims 1, 14 and 21 in condition for allowance.

Claims 2-7 depend from Claim 1; Claims 15-20 depend from Claim 14; and Claims 22-27 depend from Claim 21. As such, Applicants respectfully submit that these dependent claims be deemed allowable for at least the same reason(s) Claims 1, 14, and 21, respectively, as well as for the additional subject matter recited therein.

Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection.

Claim Rejection -- 35 U.S.C. §102 and §103

Claims 1 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,386,637 to Buchanan et al. (Buchanan); Claims 2 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Buchanan in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,725,516 to Cook et al. (Cook); Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Buchanan in view of Cook as applied to Claims 2 and 6, further in view of WO 00/12403 to Uhl et al. (Uhl); Claims 14 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Buchanan in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,285,445 to Vander Molen et al. (Vander Molen); Claims 15 and 22-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Buchanan in view of Vander Molen as applied to Claims 14 and 21, further in view of Cook; Claim 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Buchanan in view of Vander Molen as applied to Claims 14 and 21, further in view of Cook as applied to Claims 15 and 22-25, and further in view of Uhl; and Claims 16, 26 and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Buchanan in view of Vander Molen as applied to

Claims 14 and 21, further in view of Cook as applied to Claims 15 and 22-25, further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,741,237 to Walker.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections for at least the following reason(s).

As noted above, the Office Action indicates that Claims 4-5 and 18-20 recite allowable subject matter. In this regard, Claims 1, 14 and 21 have been amended herein to incorporate the indicated allowable subject matter. In particular, Claims 1, 14 and 21 have been amended to recite the feature of an upper end of the first connector opposes the second connector and includes at least one scallop formed thereon that provides a channel for air to flow through.

Applicants respectfully submit that Buchanan, Cook, Uhl, Vander Molen, and Walker, i.e., collectively known as the “applied art of record,” alone or in any combination thereof, fail to disclose, teach or otherwise suggest such a feature.

To qualify as prior art under 35 U.S.C. §102, a single reference must teach, i.e., identically describe, each feature of a rejected claim. As explained above, the applied art of record does not disclose or suggest each and every feature recited by pending independent Claims 1, 14 and 21.

Therefore, the applied art of record does not anticipate or render obvious the subject matter recited by independent Claims 1, 14 and 21. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit independent Claims 1, 14, and 21 should be deemed allowable over the applied art of record.

Claims 2-7 depend from Claim 1; Claims 15-20 depend from Claim 14; and Claims 22-27 depend from Claim 21. As such, Applicants respectfully submit that these

dependent claims be deemed allowable for at least the same reason(s) Claims 1, 14, and 21, respectively, as well as for the additional subject matter recited therein.

Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of the application, withdrawal of the outstanding objection and rejections, allowance of Claims 1-7 and 14-27, and the prompt issuance of a Notice of Allowability are respectfully solicited.

Should the Examiner believe anything further is desirable in order to place this application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

In the event this paper is not considered to be timely filed, the Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Any fees for such an extension, together with any additional fees that may be due with respect to this paper, may be charged to counsel's Deposit Account No. 01-2300, **referencing attorney docket number 029714-00124.**

Respectfully submitted,



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